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The Swiss Observer

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FEDERAL.

TELEPHONE LESSONS IN SWISS SCHOOLS.

Following the example of the Telephone Development Association in this country, the Education Authorities in Switzerland are to provide telephone installations for use in Swiss schools.

In the schools at Lucerne special instruction is already being given, and it is intended to provide telephone lessons for every grade of pupil in state schools in the near future.

This "telephone course" will include instruction in the elementary principles of telephonic communication, hints on the correct use of the directory and on the proper method of making calls. Particular attention is to be given to impressing upon the children the necessity for clear speaking.

RELIGIOUS CENSUS IN SWITZERLAND.

According to the general census taken on December 1, 1930, and recently published, there were on that date in Switzerland 2,320,764 Protestants, 1,670,764 Roman Catholics, 18,478 Jews, while 72,718 persons belonged to other religions or had no religion. Compared with the results of the 1920 census, the above figures show an increase of 90,167 in the number of Protestants, of 85,240 in that of Roman Catholics, a decrease of 2,501 in the number of Jews, and a rise of 29,285 among those belonging to other religions or having no stated religion.

Protestants form a clear majority in 12 Cantons out of 22, while in six others the majority is formed of Roman Catholics; the four remaining Cantons are called "Mixed Cantons," as the two religions have about the same number of worshippers. Protestants and Roman Catholics are generally on friendly terms, particularly in the eastern Cantons, where there is no definite religious majority. In some Cantons they even share the same churches; for instance, at Glarus a curtain is drawn in front of the Roman Catholics' altar while the Protestant service is celebrated.

THE ECONOMIC POSITION.

At the recent meeting of the Union de Banques Suisses, the Chairman, Dr. R. Ernst, gave an instructive review of the economic situation. He did not support the view that the catastrophic fall in the world prices could be explained solely by reference to an enhanced value of money due to the limited supply of gold. The fall had been greatest in raw materials, less severe in finished and partially finished goods, and least noticeable in retail prices, rents, etc., which most influence the cost of living, and this was one of the main reasons standing in the way of a reduction in wages in Switzerland such as had taken place in other countries. In his view, the downward movement of prices represented a reaction after the high prices which ruled after the war, those prices having stimulated production beyond consuming power, while territories such as Russia, China and India were temporarily lost as centres of absorption. The evil itself, the price decline, had in itself the corrective remedy, if certain signs were not misleading that here and there the bottom had been reached from which an improvement could be expected to start.

SWISS RAILWAY LOAN OVER SUBSCRIBED.

The Four per Cent. Federal Railway Loan of 200,000,000 Swiss francs, of which 150,000,000 francs were offered for public subscription, has been oversubscribed. The applications for conversion reached 133,000,000f. and the subscriptions in cash amounted to 424,000,000.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The collection to commemorate the 400th Anniversary of the great Reformer U. Zwingli has brought in 130,000f. in the canton of Zurich alone. The funds will be used for a home for young people in Gwatt on the lake of Thun.

N.Z.

LONDON, APRIL 4, 1931.

A large fire broke out at the works of the firm A. Rebsamen and Co., in Richterswil. Although the fire brigade rendered prompt assistance, the whole of the works was burnt down to the ground. The damage sustained is estimated at about 800,000f. The whole of the staff, consisting of 60 men, has been thrown out of work.

N.Z.

The death is reported of National Councillor Dr. Theodor Oringa in Küsnacht at the age of 65. His successor will be Mr. Pfleghard of Zurich.

* * *

The staff of the tailoring firm, Burger-Kehl and Co. in Zurich, has gone on strike. The Zurich Zoo was visited in 1930 by 371,448 persons or 145,000 more than in the previous year. The accounts close with a credit balance of 119,441f. The net result of the lottery amounted to 320,000f. The sum of 124,487f. was spent for completion and extension. The erection of a restaurant is planned.

BERNE.

Last Sunday afternoon, shortly after 2.30 p.m. a small motor launch occupied by five young people left Spiez for an excursion to Merligen. About half way through the course of the boat, which coincided with the changing of the tide, decided to return to the shore. On turning the boat, which coincided with the changing of places, the boat began to sink and four members of the party were drowned. The only survivor, was the 22 year old son of the proprietor of the boat Thomann, who clung on to the boat and was rescued by a party which set out to render assistance. The names of the victims are:

Werner Dürtschi, Faulensee; Willi Bähler, Faulensee; Fritz Haenni, Spiez; and R. Maurer, Faulensee.

* * *

A landslide has occurred on the northeast side of the Mont Vully near Murten; in consequence of which the water supply for the prison of Bellechasse was interrupted.

N.Z.

GLARUS.

A big fire broke out at the works of the Baumwolldruckerei Holenstein A.G. in Glarus, destroying over 10 tons of cotton goods. The damage done both to stocks and buildings is considerable.

N.Z.

BASLE.

Prof. Dr. Laur, wellknown farming expert, has celebrated his 60th birthday Anniversary, on which occasion numerous congratulatory messages have reached him. M. Laur has, on several occasions been delegated by the Federal Council to international conferences.

SOLOTHURN.

Major Gaston von Sury-Bussy died in Solothurn at the age of 79. The deceased was at one time Editor of the "Solothurn Anzeiger," and from 1896—1917 member of the Grand Council.

N.Z.

CHAUX-DE-FONDS.

A railway accident occurred on the line Faverges—Tramelan, where a locomotive collided with a heavy loaded goods train. Several people had to be taken to hospital suffering with concussions.

N.Z.

FOOTBALL.

The international football match between Italy and Switzerland, which was played last Sunday at the Wankdorf Stadion in Berne, ended with a draw (1—1). The attendance of 20,000 was a record for Berne. The Swiss team consisted of: Pache, Minelli, Ramseyer, Loichot, Kuenzi, Gilardoni, Kramer, Abegglen II, Buchi, Abegglen III, Stalder. Abegglen III scored for Switzerland from a penalty.

F. C. Servette, Geneva, were beaten at Torino by the F. C. Torino by 3—1 goals.

ICE HOCKEY.

AROSA TEAM WINS TWO MATCHES.

The Arosa team played on Thursday, March 19th, against a Southern England team at the Golders Green Ice Rink and won by 4—1 goals. On Friday, March the 20th, they played at the Hammersmith Ice Rink against a mixed English team and won by 2—1 goals.

We wish to inform our readers that the Grosvenor House Canadians will play the Davos Ice Hockey team on Saturday evening, April 18th at 9 p.m., at Grosvenor House Ice Rink, Park Lane W.1.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

RADIO SUISSE ROMANDE:

Switzerland is on the Radio-Map Again!

On my set Berne Radio comes through at a dial reading of 65 but, for a considerable time, the homely and to me beautiful voice of the Berne Lady Announcer has been swamped by the signals of a much more powerful Polish wireless station, so that I get to hear Berne very occasionally only and then only by taking minute care with tuning in.

We always, or nearly always have wireless music at breakfast and at dinner and Mrs. Kyburg also turns it on when she is at home for luncheon. I often tell her that in many respects she is far better off than was Queen Elizabeth who, if she wanted sweet music, had to turn on her house orchestra. Now that band musicians used to sit high up in the Minstrel Gallery, I am informed and, if one is to judge by the examples of mediaeval music which we hear from time to time, the music was very thin indeed. We, of the 20th century, listen to music of the most varied kind, from Beethoven to Jazz, from Laendler to Tango, from a solo on a flute to the thundering of a full military band, or even massed bands and our musicians do not sit high up in a minstrel gallery, but they perform before our ears, just as if we were sitting at a Concert. Aye, and in a short time they will perform before our eyes too!

Well, last night, while waiting for dinner, I, as is my wont, occupied the time by switching on the wireless, and, again as is my wont, tried my luck with Berne, because I love to hear indifferent music from Berne rather than good music from anywhere out of Switzerland. Not that music from Berne is indifferent, but you know what I mean. And at that time of the evening, when one's vitality is low, when one feels hungry and somewhat bruised from the struggle to earn one's living, a few sounds from our native country always act as a powerful vitaliser, don't they? Well, I did not get Berne, because a rather powerful station chimed in with Mexican airs and songs. I listened and then heard somebody talk in French. A sort of Belgian French it seemed to my ears and I was curious to know what station that could be. I had heard of Russian stations broadcasting in various languages occasionally and, although I can get through to Leningrad quite easily on my set, I know that there are many other Russian stations operating. By and by that Belgian-French voice was heard again, telling me what a pity it was that there are so few Mexican Gramophone-Records to be had in Europe and then, to my delighted surprise, that voice mentioned Lausanne Radio Station. Soon afterwards a lady's voice, speaking French with a much better accent—as it seemed to my ears—told me that Radio Suisse Romande was speaking and broadcasting. Then came a Laendler, then a Yodel, then a Mazurka with concertina effects and there I stood, transfixed with pleasure, a happy man, a man who was privileged to hear voices from his native land, voices that meant a lot to him, music that was familiar to him, that evoked happy memories, that vibrated within him.

Well, well, Lausanne! And mind you, the signals were strong. I went up into our bathroom, which, I must tell you, is on the first floor and even there I could hear that Yodel quite distinctly. In future, before having a bath, I shall tune in Lausanne and then have musical accompaniment to my ablutions!

Now this morning, I received the week's Press-Cuttings and the very first one I saw was about

Broadcasting: Strong Signals from New Swiss Stations.

During the past few weeks listeners in this country have picked up test signals from the new Swiss station which has been erected by a British company at Sottens, near Lausanne. It is now announced that this station will commence the task of programme distribution within the next few weeks, using a wavelength of 403.8 metres. The power of this station is about 35 kilowatts, and the efficiency of the transmitter may be gathered from the fact that the test signals received in the Midlands were as strong as those received from the local regional station.

A second high-power station for Switzerland has just been completed at Beromünster, and the test signals may be expected at any

time. The power of the transmitter is rated at 60 kilowatts in the aerial, and tests will be radiated on a wave-length of 459.6 metres, this wave-length at present being in use by Zurich. This second new station has also been constructed by a British firm.

So, in a short while, we shall get Zurich and the only query will then be whether I shall still have time to write these Notes and Gleamings?

Le Grand Peuplier Solitaire :

No comments are necessary to underline the rare beauty of the following, which I find in the Bulletin Suisse d'Egypte, 19/3/1931. I am sure "M.N.G." will readily grant us permission to reproduce his symbolic poem for the delight of our readers :

PAYSAGE.

La chambre,
tout au fond de laquelle je suis assise,
est petite et sombre.

Mais,
bercée par les émouvants et graves accents
du trio de Beethoven,
comme en un rêve je ne vois,
—par la large croisée lumineuse qui attire
le regard, —

je ne vois qu'un grand peuplier solitaire
qui monte tout droit,
tranquille et fier,
dans l'atmosphère froide et transparente
d'un clair dimanche de janvier,
tout plein de soleil.

Le haut peuplier solitaire
au tronc vigoureux et souple,
aux longues branches fibreuses et fines
dessinées à la plume sur l'écran de l'air
scintillant,

nettement se détache
sur un vaste et lointain rideau laiteux de
brume opaque
tiré sur le lac, les montagnes et le ciel
d'une blancheur bleutée uniforme,
dont les plans effacés se succèdent
sous la moindre silhouette
que celle l'Esprit leur donne par la pensée,
par le souvenir de leurs lignes réelles.

Le grand peuplier solitaire
se dresse
dans la pure lumière
et le soleil joyeux.
Tranquille et fort,
orgueilleux avec humilité,
il s'élance
dans l'air cinglant et vif
d'un clair dimanche de janvier.

—Symbole de ma calme petite Patrie,
elle aussi solitaire,
droite,
libre
et fière.

M. N.G.

Although a thick yellow fog tries hard to convince us that Spring is a mere delusion, we know through our Weather Experts—and Meteorological forecasts are much more wonderful and useful than we Town-dwellers assume—that to-day's fog is waging a losing battle and that the SUN is just round the corner, as it were. EASTER is here! Or will be by the time you read these lines. Which makes me feel somewhat like those happy songsters or rhymsters who compose Christmas verses in Summer time so as to have them printed by Christmas!

Anyhow, EASTER is a glorious festival. The Festival of SPRING, or Hope Re-Born, of Life Re-Newed.

Is not business improving daily? Is not the air getting warmer? Have you noticed how, during these last few weeks men and women, boys and girls walk with a more elastic step when they go about their business? Have you noticed that people even begin to talk of coming holidays? Have you read how Seaside landladies are expecting a good season?

And have you heard the thrushes calling to each other early in the morning and making no end of a song about it?

Well, Spring is coming, is here and to celebrate it's coming, the old Pagan Folks held Spring Festivals. Zurich still has its 'Sechselaetzen', other Towns have similar festivals.

EASTER means something far deeper to us, of course. The Story of the Calvary and of the Rising from the Tomb. The story of the change that we call death and of the re-birth or awakening to a future life and a better life.

Look at it from any side you like, Easter is a glorious time, the best holiday of the year. All the hopes which we have set on 1931 have not yet been tested, we are still optimistically inclined, we feel still the good times that are coming, the good business we are going to do this year and EASTER is, for us business men, a welcome breather in which to take stock and in which to halt for a moment, ere launching our main reward which must, we feel sure, give us the pleasure we have been planning for.

So let's all be merry and enthusiastic this Easter-Tide! We know that the good time is coming, is drawing very near, is almost within our grasp and, when, on Tuesday after Easter, we go back to business, we go with a light heart, with our body filled with beautiful sunshine and with our energies re-vitalised, ready to tackle our daily task with renewed vigour and with a zest that will carry everything before it!

So, let's celebrate a real HAPPY EASTER!

UNION HELVETIA. STUDENTS SUPPER AND DANCE.

The school of the Union Helvetic held its first students dinner and dance at the Union Helvetic Club, 1, Gerrard Place, W., on Friday, March the 27th. This day may be truly recorded as a red letter day in the history of the school and will leave pleasant memories with all those who had the pleasure to be present. We understand that this was the first social function of the institution since the foundation nearly four years ago, and the organisers may be well pleased with the response, as more than 120 students and friends were present.

The pleasant Hall of the Club, in which the dinner was served—was gaily decorated for the occasion and the Union Jack and the Swiss flag were not missing. Mr. A. L. Lenegre, head of the Pulteney Institute, the latter Institution being closely connected with the school, was in the Chair. Before the dinner started, two beautiful bouquets of flowers were presented to Mrs. Lenegre and Mrs. Indermaur, wives of the Chairman pro temp., and President of the Union Helvetic, respectively.

The dinner came well up to the reputation of the U.H. cuisine and Mr. and Mrs. Rossier, the stewards of the Club are to be congratulated on having been able to satisfy even the most particular gourmets.

After the toast of H.M. the King had been proposed and duly honoured, Mr. Indermaur, President of the Union Helvetic, rose and addressed the gathering, saying that it gave him great pleasure to propose the toast to the Union Helvetic School, coupling same with the name of to-night's Chairman Mr. Lenegre. He related that the school was founded about four years ago with the object of teaching the English language to young Swiss in the catering trade, who came to these shores in order to acquaint themselves with the rudiments of this language. He mentioned that the fees at the time were rather high and it was principally due to Mr. Lenegre's great efforts that the Society was able to run the school on more economic lines under the auspices and control of the L.C.C. Education Board, and that he was glad to be afforded an opportunity to thank him on this occasion in the name of all present. The day school for English—he continued—is progressing very satisfactorily, and through the endeavours of Messrs. Lenegre and Finger, the school has been able to start French classes for British boys in the hotel trade. Not only do we—he said—undertake to teach these boys French, but we also arrange exchanges, so that they can work in Switzerland after the termination of their studies. He expressed his thanks to Mr. Allix who is in charge of these classes. He also acquainted the company with the facts that a school for senior accountancy was started under the auspices of Mr. Archibald to whom he voiced his great appreciation for the valuable co-operation so willingly given. Further he stated that a course on Inn keeper's law would start shortly.

This speech was received with hearty applause and was followed by a speech of Mr. Lenegre, head of the Pulteney Evening Institute, and Chairman of the evening.

Mr. Lenegre expressed his satisfaction on having been invited to preside over this splendid gathering, saying how very pleased he was to see such a close and happy co-operation between his institution and the U.H. school. Switzerland stands to me for homeliness, for whenever, on my frequent travels, I cross the frontier into your country, and hear "les douaniers" introducing themselves, I begin to feel "chez moi." Switzerland stands for loyalty, one of the most essential qualities of mankind. This passage of his address was enthusiastically received, and he continued by paying a well deserved tribute to Mr. Finger, Secretary of the Union Helvetic, saying that he was first of all a 100 per cent. man, secondly an enthusiast and idealist sacrificing himself for the great cause of giving English workers a fair hearing in the catering trade. This speech was received with great acclamation.

Mr. Finger was then unexpectedly called upon to say a few words and he accomplished his task with his customary efficiency. The long and hearty applause which greeted his short oration, in which he modestly disclaimed any merit in the success of the school, was a striking proof how much his services were valued.

At that moment, the major domo, which office was in the capable hands of Mr. Archibald, a member of the teaching staff, made the announcement that the mayor of Shoreditch, Mrs. Girling,

and her husband Councillor Girling had arrived, and on entering the Hall they received a hearty ovation from the whole gathering. Mrs. Girling, wearing the badge of office, said that she was extremely glad to spend a few moments in the present company as she was taking a great interest in the work of the two institutions, which she felt sure were benefiting the citizens of the two countries. On resuming her seat she was presented with a large bouquet of flowers amidst the hearty cheering of the whole gathering. Her husband, Councillor Girling, also briefly addressed the company.

In the meantime the clock pointed to 11 o'clock and the ladies, who showed so much forbearance with all the speakers, were clamouring for the dancing to begin; the Hall was soon cleared and an orchestra suddenly appeared seemingly from nowhere and before one was aware, one was waltzing around with one of the many sweet ladies present. It was a memorable and most enjoyable evening.

GYMNAStic DISPLAY. BY SWISS GYMNAStic SOCIETY.

An exceptionally good attendance was recorded at the Display given by the Swiss Gymnastic Society at the Union Helvetic on Sunday, March 22nd. The programme offered a large variety of items, very much different from previous selections. The individual work done by the men's section on the Horizontal and Parallel Bars received great applause. The Rhythmic exercises performed by the Ladies' Section as well as the Eurythmics were excellently carried out, whereas the novel feature, the "Pierrette et les cinq pierrots" was so much appreciated by the audience, that this item had to be repeated. It may well be said that the execution of this Pierrot Dance was the last word in perfection, due to the skillful coaching of the Leader of the Team, Mrs. H. Meier. The last item on the programme, the Pyramids and the Tableau Vivant, proved without doubt the star turn of the evening, for the two sections combined, really produced exceptionally smart pyramids such as the Society has long been ambitious to show the audience. No effort has been spared in making this Display a success and the Leader, Mr. Gysi, the Leader of the S.G.S., is especially worthy of praise.

The final Tableau, adequately described "Aspiration," performed during the singing of the National Anthem, completely stirred the audience, whereupon the President, Mr. Sermier, the well-known captain of the S.G.S. expressed his appreciation for the great support the team has been able to enjoy at this Display.

The Dance given by the Team in the evening again attracted a very large attendance, during which Mr. Sermier had the pleasure to welcome and introduce the 4 Delegates of the Ice Hockey Club "Arosa," who had just arrived from Switzerland to play a series of matches at various London Ice Rinks against their English Rivals, during the coming week.

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY. PENNY COLLECTION FOR A HOME FOR AGED SWISS.

The Penny Collection aims at procuring additional revenue to the Dimier Fund for the erection in England of a Home for aged Swiss.

For this purpose lists, bearing the name of the Collector, signed by two members of the Bureau of the Society, are issued.

The weekly contribution has been fixed at one penny only to enable everybody to further the scheme.

To attain this aim it is now essential to find supporters of the scheme in all the Swiss Societies and in all the firms where many Swiss are employed. (Besides the weekly contributions penny collections could be taken at Meetings, Banquets, Balls, etc.)

The Collectors would :

1. Remit the money so far collected to a member of the Bureau every 3 months.
2. Be invited to meet once every 6 months to report on their activity and make suggestions.
3. Have a Social once a year to get to know one another.

All friends of this worthy cause who are willing to act as Collectors are invited to send their names to—Theo Ritter, Hon. Secretary, Swiss House, 34, Fitzroy Square, W.1.

THE INTERNATIONAL MORTGAGE BANK.

The Swiss portion of the debenture issue of the International Mortgage Bank, amounting to 15,000,000 francs, was opened for subscription today, and was almost immediately oversubscribed.

It will be remembered that the International Mortgage Bank was founded in Basle on the recommendation of the League Financial Committee to lend money on mortgage to agricultural interests through the medium of the existing national and local channels.

Its share capital was to be 25,000,000 Swiss francs, of which 5,000,000 were paid up. Further capital is being raised in the form of debentures.